

dignity side by side with the concubines and bastards of their husbands. The love of men for men was a current vice which was hardly concealed and which degraded the sex relation.¹ The individualism of the period is interpreted as a motive for making love to the wife of another, that is, to another fully developed individual.² Adultery also appealed to the love of intrigue and the appreciation of the imaginative element. Lewd stories and dramas were produced in great numbers in which the cunning and deception of adultery were developed in all imaginable combinations of circumstances. In real life a woman's relatives showed great ferocity in enforcing against her all the current conventions about her conduct. That was because she might bring disgrace and ridicule on them by marrying beneath her, or by a liaison which was known and avenged by her husband. The assassination of the husband in such cases was only a trifling necessity which might be called for.³ A physician having married a widowed duchess, born a princess of Aragon, her brothers murdered her and her children and caused the physician to be assassinated by hired bravos.⁴ In the comedies marriage was derided and marital honor treated with contempt. Downright obscenity was not rare. Some of the comedies would not now be tolerated anywhere before an audience of men only.⁵ It seems trifling that objection was made to the nakedness of some figures in Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment." "As society became more vicious, it grew nice." ⁶

726. The cult of success. This deep depravation of all social interests by the elevation of success to a motive which justified itself has the character of an experiment. Amongst ourselves

now, in politics, finance, and industry, we see the man-who-can-do-things elevated to a social hero whose success overrides all other considerations. Where that code is adopted it calls for arbitrary definitions, false conventions, and untruthful character.

727. Literature. There were several books published in the Renaissance period which aimed to influence the mores. In the

¹ Gauthiez, *Lorenzaccio*, 65.

* *Ibid.*) 442.

? Burckhardt, *Renaissance*, 455.

⁵ Gregorovius, *Lucretia*

Borgia ^ 96.

⁸ *Ibid.*) 441.

6 Symonds, *Renaissance*, III,

425.